

fishing often goes hand-in-hand with transnational organized crime, human trafficking and forced labor, and weapons and drug trafficking. American fishermen should never be expected to compete against fraudulent seafood imports harvested with slave labor, especially in the Indo-Pacific region.

Madam Speaker, again I thank Congressman YOUNG (R-AK) for his partnership as the original cosponsor on this important, bipartisan bill. I urge all Members to join us in cosponsoring the Wildlife Conservation and Anti-Trafficking Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LLOYD SMUCKER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Mr. SMUCKER. Madam Speaker, due to illness I missed Roll Call vote No. 59. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 59.

IN SUPPORT OF PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I am proud to be a sponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act.

This Act is needed to stop discriminatory practices by employers against our mothers, wives, daughters, and granddaughters that do the same job as their male counterparts.

It is sad that today in America, women working full-time, year-round still earn 80 cents, on average, for every dollar earned by men.

Women of color face the brunt of the inequality, with African American women earning 61 cents, Latinas earning 53 cents, and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women earning 62 cents compared with white, non-Hispanic men.

This year marks the 10-year anniversary of President Barack Obama signing the Lily Ledbetter Act, which made it easier to sue in cases of pay discrimination.

This legislation that we are discussing today—the Paycheck Fairness Act—is but one small step towards that end.

The Paycheck Fairness Act, will strengthen the Equal Pay Act—passed more than 45 years ago—and as a result improve the law's effectiveness, and help to address the persistent wage gap between men and women.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would:

Clarify acceptable reasons for differences in pay by requiring employers to demonstrate that wage gaps between men and women doing the same work are truly a result of factors other than sex.

Deter wage discrimination by strengthening penalties for equal pay violations, and by prohibiting retaliation against workers who inquire about employers' wage practices or disclose their own wages.

The bill's approach would ensure that women can obtain the same remedies as

those subject to discrimination on the basis of race or national origin.

Provide women with a fair option to proceed in a class action suit under the Equal Pay Act, and allow women to receive punitive and compensatory damages for pay discrimination.

Clarify the establishment provision under the Equal Pay Act, which would allow for reasonable comparisons between employees to determine fair wages.

Authorize additional training for Equal Employment Opportunity Commission staff to better identify and handle wage disputes.

It will aid in the efficient and effective enforcement of federal anti-pay discrimination laws by requiring the EEOC to develop regulations directing employers to collect wage data, reported by the race, sex, and national origin of employees.

It will require the U.S. Department of Labor to reinstate activities that promote equal pay, such as: directing educational programs, providing technical assistance to employers, recognizing businesses that address the wage gap, collecting wage-related data, and conducting and promoting research about pay disparities between men and women.

More importantly for our young ladies going into the workforce it will establish a competitive grant program to develop salary negotiation training for women and girls.

As a Member of the Women's Caucus I have been fighting for pay equity for American women since before I arrived here as a Representative in 1995, and I believe that equal pay for equal work is a simple matter of justice.

Wage disparities are not simply a result of women's education levels or life choices.

In fact, the pay gap between college educated men and women appears first after college—even when women are working full-time in the same fields with the same major as men—and continues to widen during the first 10 years in the workforce.

Further, this persistent wage gap not only impacts the economic security of women and their families today, it also directly affects women's retirement security tomorrow.

Now is the time for additional proactive measures to effectively address wage discrimination and eliminate loopholes that have hindered the Equal Pay Act's effectiveness.

I urge my colleagues, both men and women to support equality in rights and pay for all Americans by supporting the Paycheck Fairness Act.

HONORING DR. TWANA COOKS-ALLEN AT CONGRESSMAN VELA'S BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Mr. VELA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Twana Cooks-Allen of Harlingen, Texas for her exceptional service to the Rio Grande Valley.

Since earning her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology and Marriage and Family Therapy, Dr. Cooks-Allen has been an esteemed professional in mental health for over 30 years.

Dr. Cooks-Allen's experience includes support to the Department of Homeland Security

and the Department of Defense, as well as local and state agencies in Minnesota, Missouri, Illinois, and Texas. Throughout her career, she has helped patients struggling with depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic suicidality, substance abuse, sexual assault, pedophilia, eating disorders, schizophrenia, and personality disorders.

Dr. Cooks-Allen currently works as Marriage and Family Counselor at the Veterans Affairs Texas Valley Coastal Bend Healthcare System in Harlingen. She is also the proud founder of the Veteran Kids/Teen Program at the Veterans Outreach Center. The program provides children of veterans with emotional, psychological, and educational assistance.

A true champion, Dr. Cooks-Allen also spends her spare time helping our veterans and their children. Every year she hosts a one-week summer camp with activities, meals, and snacks for the children of veterans. Her goal is to create a place for these children to discuss their concerns and fears and to receive support from their peers, while enjoying activities. Not only does she dedicate her time to these programs, Dr. Cooks-Allen also funds many of the activities herself.

I am pleased to recognize Dr. Twana Cooks-Allen for her generous and invaluable support in Texas' 34th Congressional District. Whether working at the VA or volunteering with veterans, our district and the State of Texas are forever grateful for her work. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking her, her family, and friends on this special occasion.

TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF MARY ALICE O'CONNOR

HON. MARK DESAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of Mary Alice O'Connor, a longtime resident of the Bay Area.

Born in January 1943 to an Irish Catholic family, Mary Alice grew up in Chicago, Illinois. In 1968, she headed to the West Coast and eventually settled in the Bay Area. While raising three children, Mary Alice worked in her family's printing business and later for a telephone company.

Mary Alice was always passionate about philosophy and spiritualism. In 1991, she pursued her goal of bringing peace, joy, and compassion to the world by becoming an ordained Unity minister. She served the community through ceremonies for weddings, memorials, blessings, and other events. Mary Alice also taught inherent beauty and self-expression through spiritual rehabilitation sessions, working to promote physical and spiritual healing.

In the early 2000s, Mary Alice became the Executive Director of the Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center in Walnut Creek, CA. During her leadership, the peace center became an engaged and energetic community partner.

Mary Alice passed away on December 3, 2018. She is survived by her sister Margaret O'Connor; her children Glory Marshall, Sikwaya Condon, and Shasta Lockwood; and her grandchildren Chavez Li Condon, Moses Lockwood, and Jacob Lockwood; her former husband Pat Condon, and her partner Willard Davis.

Mary Alice O'Connor will be remembered by me and the Contra Costa community for dedication to peace and harmony in Contra Costa and around the world.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Ms. FRANKEL. Madam Speaker, on roll call vote 55, I was not present because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "NAY."

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LOCAL PROSECUTOR HOME RULE ACT OF 2019

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Local Prosecutor Home Rule Act of 2019 to give District of Columbia residents another important element of the self-government enjoyed by all other American citizens, including those in the U.S. territories. The bill would establish a local prosecutor's office designated under local law to prosecute all local crimes in the District. Under federal law, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, a federal entity, is responsible for prosecuting most local crimes committed by adults here, which is the greater part of its caseload, in addition to prosecuting federal crimes. This bill is special because it effectuates a 2002 advisory referendum, approved by 82 percent of D.C. voters, to create a local prosecutor's office.

There is no law enforcement issue of greater importance to D.C. residents on which they have less say than the prosecution of local crimes here. A U.S. Attorney has no business prosecuting the local crimes of a jurisdiction, an anachronism that is out of place in any American self-governing jurisdiction. In fact, the territories of the United States—Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands—all have local prosecutors to prosecute local crimes. The absence of a local D.C. prosecutor is one more anachronism from the pre-home rule days when D.C. had no local government. The goal of this bill is to give the District the same jurisdiction over the criminal justice matters that state, local and territorial jurisdictions justifiably regard as mandatory.

Amending federal law to create a local prosecutor would be an important step toward our goal of achieving true self-government. I urge my colleagues to support this important measure.

HONORING DONALD HAMM AT CONGRESSMAN VELA'S BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Mr. VELA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Donald Hamm for his positive contributions to the Rio Grande Valley.

Mr. Hamm was born in Montgomery, Alabama and joined the United States Army after graduating from high school. He was honorably discharged from the military after serving his country for six years. He enrolled in nursing school, and has served as a nurse in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) since the 1990s. The welcoming environment and diverse culture of the Valley encouraged Mr. Hamm to make Brownsville his permanent home.

Mr. Hamm is an active member of our community, engaging in areas beyond the medical field. He was elected 2nd Vice President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's LRGV chapter. Hamm founded the South Texas Mass Choir (STMC) in 2006, and serves as its director. STMC, the first and only Gospel Mass Choir in South Texas, had its debut performance in 2006 at the first ever Gospel Explosion in Brownsville, Texas at the Jacob Brown Auditorium. Mr. Hamm is also a pastor at the Kingdom Connection Worship Center, and provides marriage counseling to couples in the region.

I am pleased to recognize Mr. Hamm's positive work in Texas' 34th Congressional District. Brownsville is thankful for his service in the military and the medical field. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking him, his family, and friends on this special occasion.

HOWARD G. LANE—JUSTICE,
JUDGE LAWYER, ADVOCATE

HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, the Honorable Howard G. Lane, Supreme Court Justice, Queens County, 11th Judicial District (Retired) was elected Judge of the Civil Court in Queens County in November 2003, after 24 years of practicing law. A graduate of Manhattan College where he was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree and awarded a Juris Doctor degree in 1978 from Hofstra University Law School and the recipient of Fredrick Douglass National Moot Court Competition, "Best Oralist" Northeast Regional Competition Award and admitted to practice law in the state of New York in 1979.

From 1979 to Judge Lane's election to the Civil Court, he served as Law Clerk and Principal Court Attorney for Supreme Court Justice Leslie G. Leach in the Queens County Court prior to serving as a sole practitioner engaged in the private practice of law and hearings. In his long and distinguished career, he also served as a Hearing Officer for the Transit Adjudication Bureau and staff attorney for Community Action for Legal Services, Inc.

Justice Lane's approach to leadership is exemplified by his fervent belief in the concept of

teamwork and empowerment. His aim has been to lead by example, re-energizing and transforming the culture of the judicial institutions he has led through a partnership between administrators and front-line staff. His commitment to the Judicial System and his respect for the value of our law resulted in his legal opinions and rulings being recognized as exemplary of the finest legal analysis and thinking.

That I, GREGORY W. MEEKS, Member of the 116th Congress, on behalf of the constituents of the Fifth Congressional District of New York, congratulate Howard G. Lane for his twenty-four years of service to quality legal practice. On behalf of the 723,000 residents of the Fifth Congressional District, I thank Judge Lane for his outstanding and ongoing contribution to our Judicial Institution's integrity and local and global community's wellbeing.

COAL RIDGE CHEERLEADING CHAMPIONSHIP TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Coal Ridge Titans' co-ed cheer team for winning the 3A Cheer Spirit state championship in Denver. Their All-Girls team also placed second in the All-Girls category.

In total, the Titan's co-ed team scored 78.05 points over the opposing Strasburg, which scored 71.12 points. Bayfield placed third and Alamosa placed fourth in the state championship spirit competition. The Titan's success is a testament to their strength, teamwork, and dedication. Team members included: Kyla Boyd, Andrea Jurado, Pilar Pagni, Kalicia MacGregor, Haven Prodzinski, Cipriana Dacuma, Paige Stecklein, Christian Vasquez, Hartleigh Porter, Madison Balizan, Tana Couey, Tori Byers, Brayden Kammers, Nathan Tomasello, Nicole Elliott, Lacey Peterson, Annikya Wight.

Alongside the co-ed team, the All-Girls Coal Ridge cheer team placed second overall in the state with an overall score of 68.02. Only four of the 19 girls on the team had formal cheer experience, which made their win especially significant. Their endless work-ethic and ability to overcome adversity, which culminated in their ultimate success, should make them proud. For many of the team's players, this win is the achievement of a goal they have worked towards for years. I commend their coaches and each member of the team for their sportsmanship and competitive spirit. Team members included: Olivia Oldham, Litzy Martinez, Litzy Rivera, Morgan Blodeay, Jinessa Hayden, Valerie Capraro, Samantha Sarmiento, Samantha Copeland, Leila Green, Natalie Smyth, Aurie Madrid, Savannah Madrid, Denisse Ortega, Odalys Quezada, Brynlee Elswick, Phoebe Young, Cara Groves, Rhaya Carmichael, Sydney Stanley.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to have these incredible students call the Third Congressional District in Western Colorado home, and I offer my sincere congratulations. I wish them luck in their future endeavors, and I am eager to see what they will accomplish going forward.